

Congressman Michaud Announces Major Increase in Federal Funding for Transportation in Maine

Thursday, July 28 2005

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The bill directed over \$950 million to Maine for highways alone in the next five years. Maine will receive an average of about \$44 million per year more than under TEA-21, the last authorization bill, an average increase is about 30% per year.

Because TEA-21 was an authorization over 6 years and H.R. 3 covers only 5, it is difficult to compare the total funding numbers-however, if compared over an average five year period and given Maine's average increase per year, the state will be receiving an increase of about \$220 million total for highways over TEA-21. Projected over a six year period, the increase would be \$264 million.

Because the final version was only completed late last night, no transit projections are yet available.

Michaud is a member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, the panel that authored the \$286.5 billion transportation reauthorization legislation to fund the nation's highway and transit needs through 2010.

"Although it is long overdue, I'm glad that both Houses were able to come to an agreement on this legislation, because it is an absolutely crucial economic package for Maine," said Michaud. "Federal transportation funding already generates approximately 10,000 jobs in our state and the added funding in this bill should help us add even more jobs as we work to improve our infrastructure and keep Maine's roadways safe."

The \$46.8 million in funding for High Priority Projects for Maine's Second Congressional District represents an increase from the last time the transportation authorization bill was considered in 1998. At that time, the entire state of Maine received a total of \$45 million for such projects, representing the combined totals of all four members of Maine's Congressional delegation. Congressman Michaud also secured \$2 million outside of the High Priority Projects program for research at the Advanced Wood Composites Laboratory at the University of Maine.

The High Priority funding includes \$11 million dollars for the replacement of the Waldo-Hancock Bridge. The Waldo-Hancock Bridge has been the highest profile transportation project in Northern Maine in the past two years. This funding comes in addition to the \$5 million dollars that Michaud was able to garner in the last two years for the bridge, working together with the rest of the Maine delegation, bringing the total federal funding he has helped secure to \$16 million.

"Work on the new Waldo-Hancock Bridge is progressing and this funding is critical to ensuring that the work is completed as quickly as possible," said Michaud.

Michaud was also able to secure \$7 million dollars for the new Calais/St. Stephen border crossing in the transportation bill, about half of the project's estimated total cost. With funding secured from other sources, this amount will ensure that the project is fully funded and can be completed. The border crossing in Calais is now the 8th busiest commercial crossing to Canada in the United States. This funding should speed the construction schedule at the crossing, improve security and decrease congestion. The crossing will also be a gateway for improved East-West highway routes across Maine that should help the state increase commerce.

The bill will also include funding that Michaud acquired to improve transportation links in Aroostook County, which has frequently been neglected in transportation investment in the past. This includes \$3 million to plan and construct North-South Aroostook highways in order to improve access to the St. John Valley, and \$1 million to plan and construct better highway access between Route 161 in Daigle to US Route 1 in Madawaska.

Michaud also secured funding for business and economic development projects in Maine cities and towns. This includes \$2.8 million for the Penobscot Riverfront Development project for bicycle trails,

amenities, and traffic circulation improvements in Bangor, \$4.36 million to construct the Lewiston/Auburn Downtown Connector, \$1.5 million for improvements to Route 108 to enhance access to the business park in Rumford, and \$400,000 for safety enhancements on Routes 11, 6, and 16 to support the Eastern Piscataquis Industrial Park in Dover-Foxcroft.

Michaud also made investment in trails a key component of Maine's project funding. This includes \$1 million to construct a bicycle and pedestrian bridge over the Stillwater River in Orono, \$500,000 for improvements to the Interconnecting Trail System for bike and pedestrian trails in the Katahdin region, and \$4 million for general construction plus multi-use trail and snowmobile accommodations for the Route 116 Bridge in Medway.

Other projects in the Second District include \$3 million for the replacement of the Route 201-A "covered" bridge in Norridgewock, \$1 million for Route 2 Improvements from Bethel to Gilead, \$1.5 million for relocation of the southbound on-ramp to I-95 at exit 184 in Bangor to improve safety, and \$250,800 to purchase new buses to improve commuting to the Jackson Labs in Bar Harbor.

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Please see attached document for a listing of projects funded in the Second District

Funding Specifically
for Maine's
Second Congressional District Included in the House Transportation
Reauthorization Bill

Project

Funding

Replacement of Waldo-Hancock Bridge

\$11,000,000

Construction of Calais/St.
Stephen Border Crossing Project

\$7,000,000

Plan and construct
North-South Aroostook highways, to improve access to St. John Valley,
including Presque Isle Bypass and other improvements

\$3,000,000

Construct bicycle and
pedestrian bridge over Stillwater
River, Orono

\$1,000,000

Plan and construct
Lewiston/Auburn Downtown Connector

\$4,360,000

Construction and snowmobile
safety accommodations for Route 116 Bridge, Medway

\$4,000,000

Replacement of the Route
201-A "covered" bridge, Norridgewock

\$3,000,000

Plan and construct highway

access between US Route 161 and US Route 1 in Madawaska

\$1,000,000

Penobscot Riverfront
Development for bicycle trails, amenities, and traffic circulation
improvements, Bangor
and Brewer

\$2,800,000

Improvements to the
Interconnecting Trail System for bike/pedestrian trails near Baxter State Park

\$500,000

Route 2 Improvements from Bethel to Gilead

\$1,000,000

Improvements to Route 108
to enhance access to business park, Rumford

\$1,500,000

Relocation of southbound
on-ramp to I-95 at exit 184,Bangor

\$1,500,000

Safety Enhancements on
Routes 11, 6, and 16 for Piscataquis
County Industrial
Development

\$400,000

Improve portions of Route
26 between Bethel and Oxford

\$1,000,000

Improve portions of Route
116 between Lincoln and Medway to bring road up to modern standard

\$3,500,000

Bar Harbor, ME Purchase, new buses to enhance commuting near the
Jackson Labs

\$250,800

Advanced Wood Composites
Laboratory at the University
of Maine

\$2,000,000

TOTAL

\$48,810,800